

Take any view you like of the service actually rendered to humanity by the Webbs, it is yet impossible to deny that to render such service has been their steady, unswerving and disinterested aim throughout In its course they have had to meet the normal share of misunderstanding, of criticism, even of ridicule Against resentment, against bitterness, against all the mynad forms of unchantableness, private and public, they have been protected by the integrity of their will to serve, and by the secure possession of then private talisman of affection They do not mind what anyone says They just go on with their work As G D H Cole said, in a moment of not uncommon exasperation, "The woist of Webb is that he is permanent "

Peimanent, and in a sense not only a permanent challenge to hedonism, but a peimanent question mark to the mind For the plan docs exact its price, something theie is that is lacking What is it? Partly, of course, all that is lumped together, vaguely and loosely, under the general vague head of " aesthetic values " A largish compaitmcnt of human experience, this to some, the most vital, that which gives significance to the rest For them, in any serious sense, it is not there And there is something else, too, harder to get into words When Mi Wells' egregious hero comes out of the house in Chambers Street, which is blatantly a picture of 41, Grosvenor Road, and leaves its "administrative fizzle" to pass out into the London night, he is intensely aware,

emotionally, of
a quality in its obscure and deep pulsations
that eludes
the Webb thermometer of some element,
irrational and
yet passionate, in human creatures and in
human existence,
which it does not register and cannot
account for For
those who do leave it out, living may be
easier, yet they
are ignorant of something the complete man
must know
One interrogates their story, in the effort to
track this
blind spot down The things left out, so far
as one can